

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DACCA 03056 160339Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 IO-14 ISO-00 AID-05 HA-05 CA-01
AGRE-00 EB-08 ICA-20 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 /114 W
-----109301 160525Z /14

R 150922Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9307
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
CINCPAC

UNCLAS DACCA 3056

CINCPAC FOR POLAD: ROME FOR FODAG

DEPARTMENT PASS ALSO AID/ASIA AND AID/OFDA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS : PBOR, PINT, EAID, BG, BM
SUBJECT : ARKANESE REFUGEE PROBLEM

SUMMARY: RELIEF MINISTRY ADVISED USAID DIRECTOR MAY 13
THAT ARKANESE REFUGEES CONTINUE CROSSING BURMESE BORDER
INTO BANGLADESH AT THE RATE OF 6,000 TO 7,000 PER DAY.
ONE 707 PLANE LOAD OF RELIEF SUPPLIES ARRIVING FROM LONDON
MAY 18. NO OVERALL PLAN ESTABLISHED TO COPE WITH THE
ANTICIPATED LOAD OF 200,000 REFUGEE. ONLY REQUEST FOR
ASSISTANCE THUS FAR MADE BY BDG TO UN AND BY BANGLADESH
RED CROSS TO GENEVA. UN HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES
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HAS HAD A TEAM IN COUNTRY SURVEYING THE PROBLEM. END
SUMMARY.

1. RELIEF SECRETARY KHASRU CALLEMSIN USAID DIRECTOR TONER,
UN RESIDENT REP ZAGORIN, AND WFP REPRESENTATIVE PAGE
MAY 13 FOR A BRIEFING ON THE ARKANESE REFUGEE SITUATION.
LATEST REPORTS AVAILABLE TO KHASRU INDICATED AT THAT TIME

125,000 REFUGEES HAD BEEN REGISTERED AT NINE CAMPS IN CHITTAGONG SECTOR OF BANGLADESH. REFUGEES CONTINUING TO CROSS THE BORDER AT THE RATE OF SIX TO SEVEN THOUSAND PER DAY. THEY HAVE NO CLOTHING, MEDICINES OR FOOD WITH THEM AND ARE FACING ACUTE SHELTER PROBLEMS, GIVEN EARLY MONSOON RAINS. SANITATION CONDITIONS ARE DEPLORABLE AND HEALTH STANDARDS ARE EXPECTED TO DETERIORATE GIVEN EXPOSURE TO ELEMENTS AND LACK OF MEDICAL FACILITIES IN AREA.

2. ZAGORIN, PAGE, AND OTHER UN AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES VISITED REFUGEE CAMPS EARLY LAST WEEK AND CONFIRMED KHASRU'S COMMENTS. ZAGORIN LATER SHARED WITH TONER HIS REPORTING MESSAGES TO UN SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM DESCRIBING DETAILS OF PROBLEMS, AND NEED FOR SPEEDY ARRIVAL OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.

3. KHASRU LISTED PRIORITY NEEDS AS CLOTHING, PLASTIC SHEETING FOR USE IN SHELTERS, BLANKETS, AND FOOD. A 707 PLANE LOAD OF RELIEF SUPPLIES INCLUDING MEDICINES, CLOTHING AND PLASTIC SHEETING IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN BANGLADESH FROM LONDON MAY 18. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE RAPID GROWTH OF THE REFUGEE POPULATION THESE SUPPLIES WILL MEET A VERY SMALL PORTION OF REQUIREMENTS. THE BANGLADESH RED CROSS HAS TURNED OVER TWO THOUSAND BLANKETS, SOME CLOTHING AND TENTS TO THE NINE REFUGEE CAMPS WHICH ARE BEING ADMINISTERED BY THE BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT. ASSISTANCE OF PVO'S IN TERMS OF SUPPLIES HAS BEEN SOUGHT. UNCLASSIFIED

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4. THE BDG FORWARDED A REQUEST TO THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM FOR FOOD FOR 200,000 REFUGEES FOR NINETY DAYS. WHEAT NOW BEING SUPPLIED FROM GOVERNMENT STOCKS IS BEING PROCESSED INTO ATTAR IN CHITTAGONG. KHASRU NOTES HE HAS AN ACUTE PROBLEM WITH TRANSPORTATION FROM CHITTAGONG TO THE REFUGEE CAMPS WHICH TAKES FROM FOUR TO SIX HOURS OF DRIVING. HE ESTIMATES A NEED FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED VEHICLES TO MEET CONTINUING TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS.

5. KHASRU SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO ESTIMATE AS TO THE LENGTH OF TIME REFUGEE FACILITIES WILL BE REQUIRED. HE IS PERSONALLY PESSIMISTIC THAT THERE WILL BE AN EARLY RESOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. PAGE ESTIMATES THAT TO MEET MINIMUM FOOD NEEDS FOR 100,000 REFUGEES, 40 TONS OF WHEAT PER DAY ARE REQUIRED. PAGE BELIEVES IMMEDIATE PLANNING SHOULD BE ON THE BASIS OF 200,000 REFUGEES. FYI: BANGLADESH RADIO MAY 15 ESTIMATES NUMBER OF REFUGEES AT 145,000. END FYI.

6. KHASRU CONFIRMED TONER'S IMPRESSION THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO APPEAL FOR BILATERAL ASSISTANCE AS YET, AND THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE BRIEFING WAS TO PROVIDE THE USG WITH BACKGROUND INFOR-

MATION IN ANTICIPATION OF A REQUEST FROM THE UN FOR US PARTI-
CIPATION IN A LARGE SCALE RELIEF OPERATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Draft Date: 15 may 1978
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: n/a
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Subject: ARKANESSE REFUGEE PROBLEM SUMMARY: RELIEF MINISTRY ADVISED USAID DIRECTOR MAY 13 THAT ARKANESSE REFUGEES CONTINUE CROSSING BURMESE B
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